

REMARKS

1. Summary of Office Action

In the Office Action mailed December 14, 2006, the Examiner objected to various informalities regarding claims 3-4 and 34-41. The Examiner also rejected claims 1, 3-7, and 10-13 under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,996,621 (Borella). The Examiner also rejected claims 34-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,009,474 (Lu), and rejected claims 37 and 39-41 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lu in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,493,447 (Goss).

2. Status of the Claims

Presently pending are claims 1-13 and 34-41, of which claims 1 and 34-36 are independent, and the remainder are dependent.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to more particularly claim aspects of the method that yield at least part of their advantageous function with respect to related structure. Additional amendments to claim 1 recite an internal network that connects the subdevices. Further, the steps of claim 1 have been relabeled for consistency. Support for the amendments may be found in the original specification on page 2, lines 11-20, and in Figures 1 and 2, for example.

Applicants have amended claims 3, 4, 11, and 13 to ensure consistency of antecedent basis with claim 1, as well as to address the Examiner's objections (to claims 3 and 4).

Applicants have amended claims 34-36 to clarify that the network access system is comprised of elements within a chassis. In addition, the terms "internal" and "external" have been introduced to more clearly describe the networks recited in the claims. The amendments also address the Examiner's objections to these claims. No new matter been introduced.

Claims 38, 40, and 41 have been amended to ensure consistency of antecedent basis with claim 36.

3. Response to Claim Objections

The amendments to the claims described above include certain changes that address the Examiner's objections. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objections as stated in the present Office Action.

4. Response to Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-7, and 10-13 under obviousness-type double patenting over claim 1 of Borella. Applicants note that the Examiner presented arguments directed to "the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting," but evidently cited M.P.E.P. paragraph 8.30, which applies to statutory double patenting under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Since the Examiner's arguments apply to obviousness-type double patenting, instead of statutory double patenting under Section 101, the rejections may be overcome by submitting a terminal disclaimer. M.P.E.P. 804.01. For the sake of expediency, Applicants therefore submit herewith a terminal disclaimer.

5. Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C §102(b)

The Examiner also rejected claims 34-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Lu.

Lu does not teach elements in a chassis.

Lu does not teach a second device allocating an external network address and ports to a first device on an internal network, wherein the external address and ports are used in combination to allow the first device to communicate with devices on the external network.

Lu teaches BOOTP, in which a server is reassigned a network address by a client host. The Examiner asserted that this reads on the Applicants' address allocation method. It does not, because Lu teaches that the server, which is the intermediary for the client's communication with devices accessible via the server (Lu's WAN server), is reassigned a network address by the client host. In contrast, Applicants claim that the intermediary device (second subdevice) allocates an external address to the first subdevice on the internal network. See Lu col. 1, lines 28-50, and col. 1, line 52 – col., line 5. These sections happen to be cited by the Examiner, but actually argue against the Examiner's assertions.

Further the Examiner asserted that Lu's client is the same as Applicants' first subdevice and that Lu's server is the same as Applicants' second subdevice. In the context of the Examiner's argument, this fixes the role of the client (first subdevice) as re-assigning the address of the server (second subdevice). This is the opposite of how RSIP works in the application.

Claims 34 and 35 expressly recite RSIP, but RSIP is clearly not taught by Lu, and thus the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw these rejections.

6. Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 37 and 39-41 as being unpatentable over the combination of Lu and Goss. These claims depend from claim 36, which is allowable for the reasons discussed above. Therefore, for at least the reason that they depend from an allowable claim, claims 37 and 39-41 are allowable as well.

7. Conclusion

The Applicants submit that the application is in good and proper form for allowance and therefore respectfully request favorable reconsideration. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned, at 312-913-3353.

Respectfully submitted,

**McDONNELL BOEHNEN
HULBERT & BERGHOFF LLP**

Date: May 14, 2007

By: /David A. Grabelsky/
David A. Grabelsky
Reg. No. 59,208